MCCC NEWS

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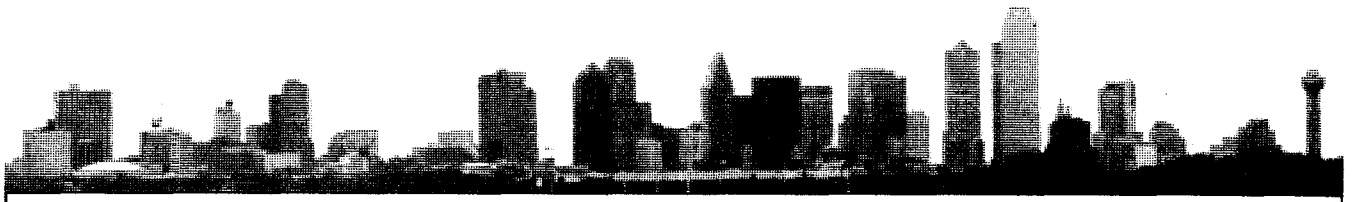

Fort Worth Volume 9 Issue 7 – July 1991 Dallas

The Migraph Scanner

A powerful tool at a reasonable price

Review by Bill Raecke

There are two basic technologies available to Amiga users to bring images of the outside world into the computer. Video images can be brought in using *DigiView*, video cameras, frame-grabbers and the like. This technology is very powerful when used with the Amiga because it makes full use of color and because cameras are very versatile. A camera can be pointed at ANYTHING and thus ANY image can be captured. The other method available is scanner technology. The big drawback to scanners is that the image to be scanned must be flat, and the size is very limited. At present there are three players in the Amiga scanner market. (Actually there are more available, but their high cost makes them outside the realm of possibility for most of us.) At the home-users' high end is the Sharp JX-100 scanner bundled with ASDG's software. This is a full color scanner capable of 300 dpi (dots-per-inch) resolution. The maximum size of the scanned image is about four by six inches. At the low-end of the scanner market are the Migraph and its twin, the Golden Image, both of which come bundled with *Touch-Up* software. These are black and white scanners capable of simulating 32 shades of gray through dithering. They can scan an image up to four by fourteen inches at up to 400 dpi. The choice between video or scanner technology will largely be determined by use to which the scanned images will be put. Video technology is best used when images are to be viewed on-screen. Scanner technology is best used when images are to be printed. This is not to say that you CAN'T use *DigiView* to capture images which are to be printed, or that you CAN'T use a scanner to capture images which are to be viewed on screen – it's just that good results will be more difficult to obtain.

Since my main computer interest at present is producing the *MCCC NEWS*, the choice of a scanner was a given. I always considered the Sharp JX-100 to be best scanner available, but its rather steep ($700+) price kept it on my wish list. The Migraph scanner is much more reasonably priced ($250 approx), and when I came upon a special offer for just $200, I couldn't pass it up any longer. What you get is the scanner unit itself, a cartridge interface, an external power supply, the *Touch-Up* software, and a 170 page spiral-bound manual. The only special system requirement is a minimum of 1 meg of memory. To make full use of the largest resolution and image size, 2 meg of contiguous free memory will be required.

The installation is rather simple. The cartridge interface plugs into the parallel port on the computer. The biggest problem any of us is likely to encounter is that our parallel port is already busy taking care of our printer. That means a quick trip to *CompUSA* for a switch-box and a cable so that the printer/digitizer selection can be made without turning off the computer and switching cables. With this setup, the cartridge interface plugs into the switch box. The power supply and the scanner both plug into the interface. (ANNOYANCE ALERT: Migraph recommends that the power to the interface be turned off when not in use for an extended period or when switching the switch-box. That means unplugging it. An on/off switch would have been a much-appreciated addition.) The *Touch-Up* software can be run from floppy or can be copied to your hard-drive.

Let's take a walk around the scanner. It's white, about six inches long and about 5 inches wide. Across one end is a large black plastic window (it's actually a very dark green but it looks black). This is the window though which you can view what is being scanned. There is a small, green LED scanning light on the left side of the upper surface. On the right side is a four-position switch labeled 1,2,3,4. This is where you select the resolution to scan. 1 is for 100 dpi, 2 indicates 200 dpi and so on. On the left side of the scanner are several other controls. There is a thumb-wheel for controlling the darkness of the scanned image. There is another four-position switch that controls the attributes of the scanned image. The switch

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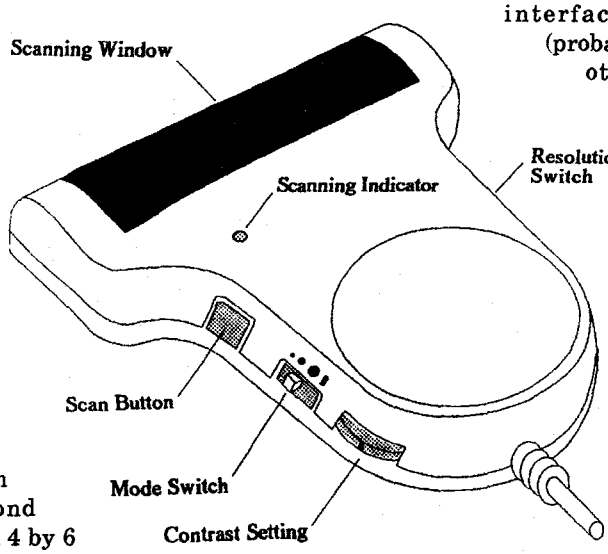
has a "letter" position and three "photo" positions. The "letter" position is for scanning black and white images. With this position you will get no dithering. The scanned image will be pure black and white. The three "photo" positions are for specifying the size of the "halftone". As I mentioned briefly earlier, the Migraph scanner scans in black and white only, but it can simulate 32 shades of gray by using dithering techniques. The smallest dot on the switch indicates a finest halftone image and results in a picture with a greater contrast. The last control on the left side of the scanner is the "start" button that controls when the scan takes place.

Scanning an image is a very simple process. First, fire up the *Touch-Up* software. Next, select the Scan icon from the top row of icons. From the second row of icons, select the one in the center. This brings up a requester for you to select the size of your scan. The requester will indicate dpi currently set on the scanner unit itself. You get to select the width (full four inches or just a two inch scan) and the maximum height (2, 4, 6, 8, 10, or 14 inches). Make your selections, click on OK and then select the left-most icon from the second row (scan to page). A pale green light will appear in the "black" plastic window on the scanner and the green LED will light. You can look through the window to see the object to be scanned. Position the scanner just above it, press the "start" button on the scanner, and begin moving the scanner downward. If the LED blinks, slow down. When you reach the end of the maximum specified length, the LED will turn off and your picture will appear on the screen. There are a couple of things that are quite remarkable. It is impossible to move the scanner at a steady speed. My hand movements tend to speed up and slow down many times as I scan an image. IT DOESN'T MATTER. Unless I move my hand VERY fast, there is no data lost and the image looks as though the scanner had been controlled by a robot. The second remarkable thing is the speed. A 4 by 6 inch image takes about 15 seconds to scan. So if you do mess it up, perhaps by not lining things up square, it's nothing to re-do it.



So we know it's simple and it's fast. All that will be unimportant if the quality of the image is poor. But, I am happy to report that the quality of the image is excellent – if you know a couple of tricks. If you have scanned a black and white image using the "letter" setting on the scanner, there are no tricks at all. The image can be taken into *PageStream* or another desktop publishing package and re-sized as desired and the printed results will be excellent. The tricks come into play if you have scanned an image using one of the "photo" settings on the scanner. As I mentioned earlier, this causes the *Touch-Up* software to simulate a 32 gray-scale image by using dithering techniques. If we take this image into *PageStream*, for example, and print it at full size everything is fine. But if we attempt to re-size it – problems. What happens is that we don't really have a grey-scale image, we have a dithered black and white image. If we attempt to resize that image, portions of the dithered pattern will be changed in a manner that will APPEAR to be inconsistent across the picture. To make a long story short, what you will get on the printed output is a picture that has stripes vertically and horizontally. But there is a way around it. On the bottom row of icons in the center is a icon that allows you to save your scanned image as a true 16 gray-scale IFF picture. *Touch-Up* does this by converting its dithered pattern one of sixteen shades of gray. This gray-scale picture can be taken into *PageStream* and re-sized to your heart's content without any problem.

The other thing that I should write about is the *Touch-Up* software itself – but I'm not going to. *Touch-Up* is a complete paint program designed to operate exclusively in black and white. It is complete enough that in order to do it justice would require another review. Since it is my belief that anyone purchasing this product will be purchasing it for the digitizer, not for the paint program you get with it, I will restrict myself to just a couple of comments. Suffice it to say that once a picture has been digitized, tools are available to manipulate it just about any way you can imagine. The interface is a little non-standard (probably originally written for some other platform and not totally Amigatized) but it's easy enough to get used to. One rather obvious omission is the inability to draw a straight line (if it's there, I haven't found it). A couple of features deserve special mention. The program is able to "outline" a black area. That is, if you have a black and white image with a large black area, that black area can be turned into a white area with a black outline. It's a great way to make line art. There is also a "bold" function that will make any line heavier in either the horizontal or vertical direction (or both). A "cleanup" function will eliminate stray dots from the image. Any of these functions can be performed on any portion of the picture independently.

I have to voice a couple of complaints. First concerning the manual. The manual is written primarily to serve as a guide to *Touch-Up*. It is as though you had purchased a new paint program which, just incidentally, allows you to digitize a picture too. It's a strange slant on

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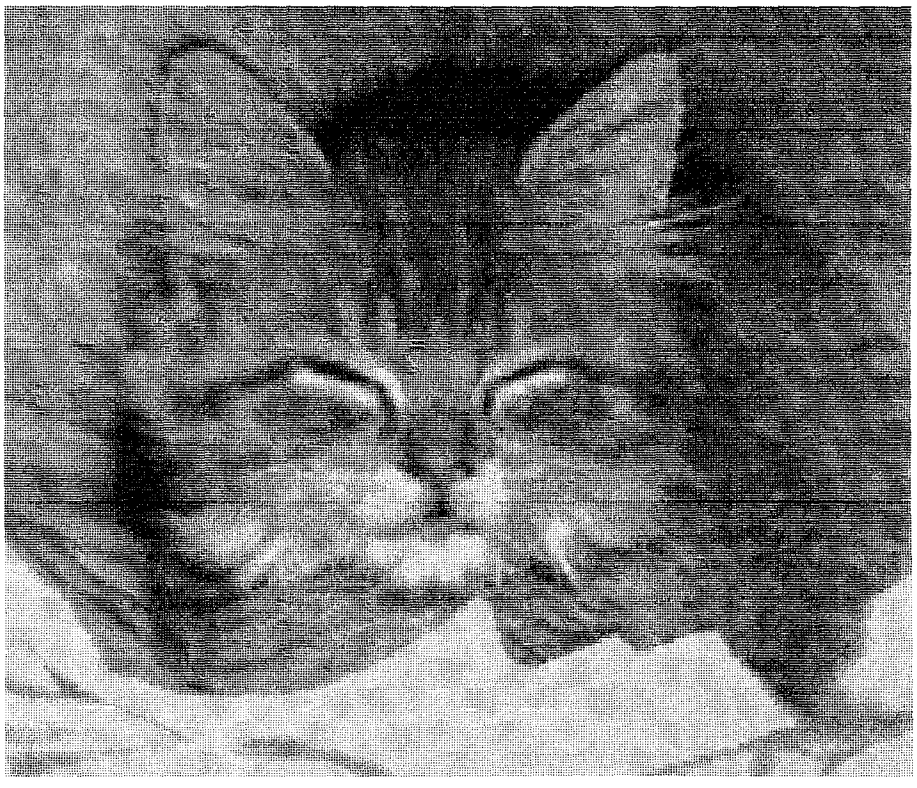
things. The *Touch-Up* manual is 170 long. Digitizing a picture is not mentioned until you get to page 121. My second complaint is with *Touch-Up* itself. The program opens a window on the Workbench screen. There is no way to change this. When I first ran the program on my non-interlaced Workbench all the pictures were distorted and they appeared as white lines on a black background. In order to properly use the program I have had to convert to an interlaced Workbench and I have had to adjust the colors on my Workbench so that *Touch-Up* would appear more natural. This is a program that should be open its own custom interlaced screen with a custom palette. The fact that it does not do this does not speak well of the programmers who converted the program to the Amiga.

One more observation. This is not really a complaint but it's something that should be made more clear than it is. The product advertises up to 400 dpi. But what they mean is that every linear inch of the source drawing will yield 400 dots, not that every linear inch of the source drawing will be sampled 400 times. With the Sharp JX-100, every inch is sampled up to 300 times and each of those samples is assigned a color value. The Migraph scanner works with just two colors. In order to simulate gray scales, dithering techniques are used. What that means is that the actual sampling rate used is significantly less than 400 dpi at the highest setting in order to achieve those simulated gray scales. The manual is rather vague concerning all this and I am still not entirely sure just what the sampling rate is. At this point, as near as I have been able to determine, the sampling rate varies with the setting of the "Letter/Photo" four-position switch. It appears to be a vary from a true 400 dpi at the "letter" setting to 66 dpi at the coarsest "photo" setting. But all this happens with the "dpi" switch set to 400.

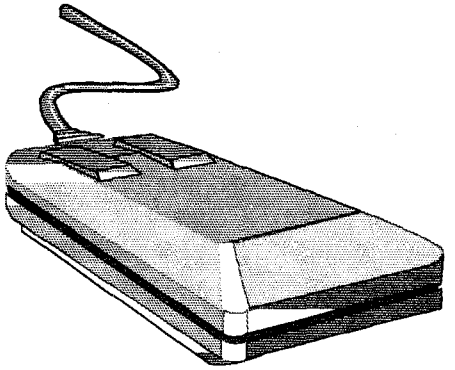
Enough of my griping. The real test is whether I am happy with the product. The answer is a enthusiastic "yes". Despite all my nit-picking, I love it. It has done a terrific job with anything I have thrown its way so far, and it gives me an image that I can use with very little modification. Now, it may be that I would be even happier with the Sharp scanner, but there's a lot to be said for keeping an extra $500 in my pocket. If you are interested in digitizing images for black and white printing, don't hesitate – get it.

MIGRAPH



This is a photograph I digitized myself using the Migraph scanner. The scanner was set to 400 dpi and the mode switch was set to the center "Photo" position. The image was then saved as a grey-scale IFF picture and the colors were adjusted using The Art Department.

Understanding Your *AMIGA*



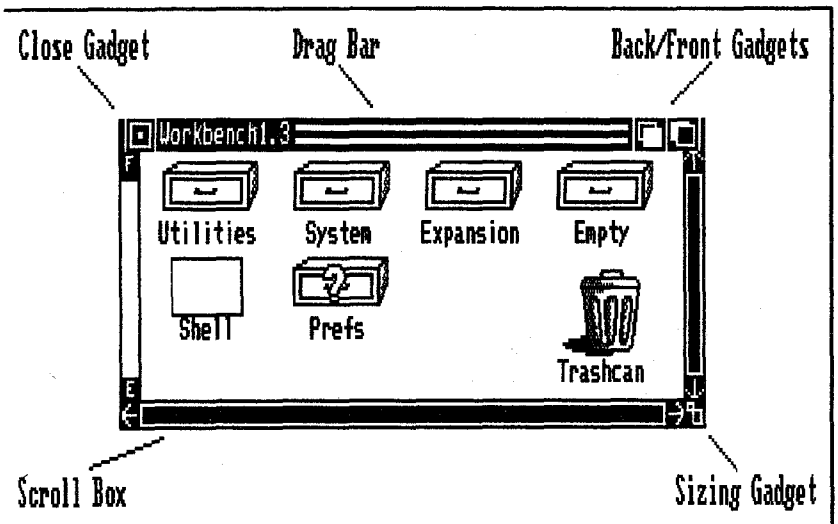
Standard Amiga gadgets

by Harold Williams

Amiga windows are controlled by manipulating objects called "gadgets". The standard gadgets found on an Amiga window include the drag bar, back/front gadget, close gadget, scroll box and sizing gadget. Amiga requesters (a small window that requires a response) can contain string gadgets and buttons. Using the mouse and keyboard to interact with the various gadgets is one of the first tasks that should be mastered by a new Amiga user.

The drag bar occupies most of a window's title bar. The drag bar can be used to reposition a window on the screen. Grab the drag bar by pointing at any part of the striped portion of the drag bar (or the part containing the window's title) then press and hold the left mouse button (the selection button) and move the mouse. Continuing to hold the left mouse button while moving the mouse will cause an outline of the window to move on the screen. When the left mouse button is released the window will be repositioned on the screen at the outline's current location.

The title bar usually contains two other gadgets. The close gadget, located in the left corner of the title bar, simply closes the window. The close gadget is activated by a single click (press and release the left mouse button). On the right side of the title bar is the back/front gadget. This is actually two gadgets (WorkBench 2.0 will turn this into one gadget). The gadget to the left is the back gadget, the gadget to the right is the front gadget. Clicking on these gadgets will cause the window to be positioned at either the back or front of other overlapping windows.



The sizing gadget is located in the lower right corner of a window. Grab the sizing gadget and drag to change the size of the window. Windows will have a minimum size and a maximum size. The maximum size may be the size of the entire screen.

The most complex gadget found on a window is the scroll box. The scroll box is used to move the contents of a window into and out of view when the window contains more objects than can be displayed within the window. Scroll boxes may be found at the bottom and right side of a window. A scroll box consists of several parts. The highlighted area inside the box is called a "scroll bar". At the ends of the scroll box are "scroll arrows". When the scroll bar completely fills the scroll box the window is displaying all of its objects and the scroll box is not functional. When the scroll bar fills a portion of the scroll box the window has objects that are either completely or partially out of the viewable area of the window. The relative size of the scroll bar to the scroll box indicates how much of the window's actual area is currently being displayed. When half of the window's horizontal area is being displayed the horizontal scroll box at the bottom of the window will be half filled with a scroll bar. If one-fourth of a window's vertical area is being displayed, the scroll box on the right of the window will have a scroll bar that is one-fourth of its height. The position of the scroll bar indicates the relative position of the viewable area of the window to the full area of the window. When the right scroll bar is at the top of the scroll box the top of the window is being displayed. If the right scroll bar is at the bottom of the scroll box the bottom of the window is being displayed. The scroll bar at the bottom of a window indicates the left/right area of the window being displayed. Grabbing and dragging a scroll bar will cause the window's objects to move into and out of the viewable area according to the distance the bar is moved. Clicking in the area of the scroll box not occupied by the scroll bar will cause the scroll bar to move a distance equal to its length (the same amount as the viewable area). The scroll arrows can also be used to move the scroll bar. Selecting a scroll arrow will cause the scroll box to move as long as the mouse button is pressed. The scroll bar can be moved in one pixel increments by pressing

→ Page 7

Who Uses Amigas?

by Pete Babic
from the newsletter of the Amiga Addicts Anonymous

NOCOPRO, a local computer store in Willoughby, Ohio, put together an interesting advertisement listing how the Amiga is used in business. Here it is:

Lucasfilms Graphic Co. uses the Amiga for all pre-production work.

The Los Angeles Airport uses it for an information Kiosk.

Disney World uses hundreds of them for controlling animated displays.

Over 800 cable television stations use Amigas for the Preview Channel, video-titling, genlock and production work. (the largest market share.)

CNN Weather is done entirely on the Amiga along with many local weather broadcasts.

Entertainers such as B. B. King, Milli Vanilli, and Frank Zappa find it invaluable.

Wyse Advertising uses them for page layout/brochure creation.

The Houston Police Department uses them to produce training videos.

Joe Robbie Stadium's animated scoreboard in Miami is run by Amiga computers. [*as is the Maverick's scoreboard at Reunion Arena in Dallas ...ed*]

Robocop II's special effects were done on an Amiga.

The French government uses them for driving simulators.

The Lynx game system's software is developed on the Amiga.

They are used abundantly by Ohio State University, Harvard, MIT, and UCLA, to name a few...

Atlanta's presentation to the National Olympic Committee was done using an Amiga. (An IBM PS/2, NEXt, or MacIntosh couldn't handle it.)

Universal Studios creates display graphics and animation in video with it.

The Province of Alberta, Government Telephone System uses 600 of them in coordinating their telephone system.

Strategic Defense Organization headquarters uses them for missile attack/defense simulation.

UCLA School of Medicine uses them to study human body motion, and also to combine different imaging technologies into a comprehensive view of the human brain.

Smith-Kettlewel Eye Research Institute in San Francisco uses Amigas in researching vision, vision equipment, and vision testing.

The Atomic Energy Commission uses them as intelligent front ends to Cray Supercomputers.

Used by NBC for *Amazing Stories'* opening scene graphics; used by ABC for background graphics for *Max Headroom.*

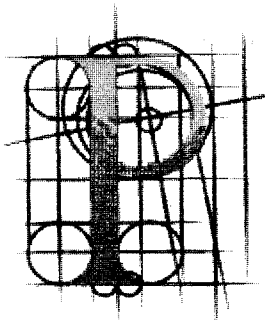
Used by Apple Computer (Yes, Apple Computer!) with the *Imprint* 35mm slide system for in-house presentation to corporate executives.

Understanding Your Amiga

Continued from page 6

the shift key while selecting a scroll arrow. Note that the function of the scroll box is related to the size of the window and the objects it contains. Resizing a window will change the position and size of the scroll bars.

Two other gadgets, string gadgets and buttons, appear on some windows. String gadgets are used to request text. A string gadget is selected by clicking the left mouse button while pointing anywhere inside the string gadget. String gadgets allow text to be entered from the keyboard. WorkBench's "Rename" option is an example of a string gadget. Button gadgets allow the mouse to be used to select options from a window. Requester windows often offer the choices of "continue" and "cancel". Button gadgets are selected by clicking the left mouse button. WorkBench's "Duplicate" option displays a requester window with button gadgets.



Using PageStream

Handling graphics and manipulating objects

by Bill Raecke

As I said at the beginning of this series, the purpose of a desktop publishing package is to allow a user to combine text and graphics on a single page and to manipulate them in various ways. So far we have concentrated on handing text and fonts. Time now to cover graphics. There are basically two kinds of graphics: structured drawings and bitmaps. And structured drawings can be broken into two sub-topics: those that are developed using *PageStream's* built-in graphic tools and those that are imported from other drawing packages. As usual, let's start with some of the basics.

First, what is a structured drawing? A structured drawing consists of objects. Those objects can be straight lines, curves, circles, ellipses or other objects grouped together to form a drawing. The advantage to structured objects is that they can be expanded or reduced in size with no loss in resolution. They are defined only by their mathematical components and it is up to *PageStream* to actually calculate their current appearance when displaying them on the screen or sending the information to the printer. *PageStream* contains all the basic drawing tools necessary to build a structured drawing. On the "toolbox" are tools for drawing a box, a box with rounded corners, a horizontal or vertical line, a line in any direction, a circle, an ellipse, an arc, a polyline or polygon, a bezier curve, or a freehand line. Most of these are self-explanatory and I don't intend to spend a lot of time explaining them. If the built-in capabilities are not sufficient (or if, like me, you lack the ability to draw anything more complicated than a square and need to use other people's art work), *PageStream* is also able to import structured drawings in a number of different formats including the Aegis format used in *Aegis Draw 2000*, the DR2D format, the *ProDraw* format used in *Professional Draw*, and the GEM format typically used on MS-DOS machines. Once imported, any of these drawings can be used as-is, sized as desired, or even changed just as though they had been drawn directly in *PageStream*.

The second kind of graphics that can be used in *PageStream* is bitmapped graphics. Bitmapped graphics are those which are produced by most paint programs. Rather than consisting of shapes and objects, they are defined simply as different colored dots in a matrix. Expanding a bitmap will result in some loss of resolution since existing columns or rows of dots will merely have to be duplicated to fill the existing space. This is where jaggies come from. *PageStream* has no capability to manipulate the components of a bitmapped drawing. Only the bitmap as a whole can be modified to any extent. Bitmaps can be imported from virtually any source including the Amiga standard IFF format as well as various formats from MS-DOS machines, MacIntosh and even Atari. HAM images can be directly imported and up to 24 bit-planes are supported which gives the full 16 million + color palette. Although all bitmaps are displayed as black and which dithered images, they can be printed in full color or color-separated. Bitmaps can be imported in one of two ways: either as an object (the entire drawing can then be placed on the page) or as a "picture window". If you import to a picture window, rectangular pieces of the original bitmap can be cut out and pasted on the document.

Manipulating Objects

Now we need to talk about manipulating objects. In *PageStream*, an object can be a structured drawing element, a bitmap, or even a block of text. All can be manipulated in much the same fashion with just a few restrictions. There is one menu that accomplishes most of these manipulations: the "Object" menu. We'll talk about each of the items on this menu briefly. The first two items are "Bring to Front" and "Send to Back". The last item is "Duplicate". These are pretty self-explanatory and so this discussion will be VERY brief. In fact, it's over. Any questions?

The next two items are "Group" and "Ungroup". What this allows you to do is to group objects of your choice together and then treat them as a single object which can be moved, duplicated, or resized together. When a structured drawing is imported, it is always imported as a group of objects. In order to work with the individual components, you will need to "ungroup" them first. Keep in mind that objects of different types can be grouped. You might have a bitmap, several structured objects, and a block of text all grouped together. The only thing to beware of in this regard is that resizing a group of objects that contains text will not work very well unless the text was originally created by typing the text directly on the screen. In this instance, if you remember back to the earlier articles in the series, the size of the text will automatically adjust to fit the new size of the block. This works quite well as part of a group. If, on the other hand, the text originally was entered into a column, the text will simply reflow within the space allotted. This will probably not give satisfactory results.

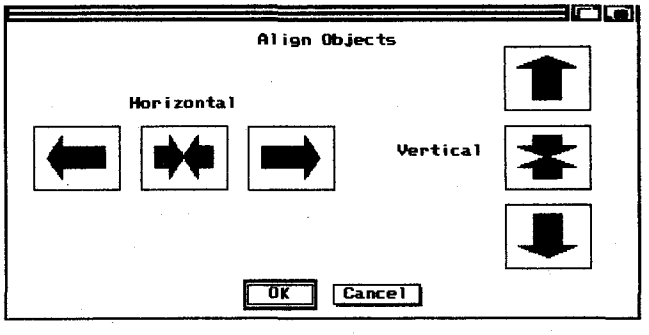
Fill styles" can be applied to any structured object or block of text. In last month's article we talked about applying a fill style to text itself. To apply it to a column

of text (the background on which the lettering appears) use the object tool, select the block, and then select the appropriate fill style from the requester. The only tricky part here is that a column of text, by default, is set to fill pattern 9 (solid) but the color is white. In order to see the pattern, the color of the object must be changed to black (or to some other color if a color printer will be used). When applying a pattern to text which has been created directly on the page or to any structured object, the color should already be set to black and so this extra complication will not occur.

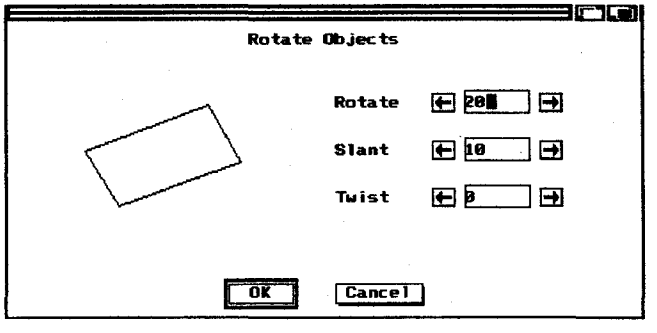
"Line styles", as with fill styles, can be applied to structured objects or to text blocks. There are eight built-in line styles including an invisible line. Blocks of text, by default, are outlined with an invisible line with a width of zero but that can be changed to any other style. One of the eight built-in line styles can be edited. The width of the line can be set to any value. The requester has gadgets ranging from .5 point to 7 point lines, but any other value can be specified by typing in the text gadget where the "Width" is specified. Of course, color can also be specified as can the beginning and ending style for the line.

The "edit coordinates" function gives total control over the exact position of the object. The object in question can be a block of text, a structured object, or a bitmap. To move an object exactly where you want it, specify the left edge and top edge and then either the width and height or the right edge and bottom edge or the percent of the original size, whichever is easier. When working with bitmaps, it is normally easier to use the percent-of-original size option since in this way it is easy to maintain the proper height to width aspect ratio.

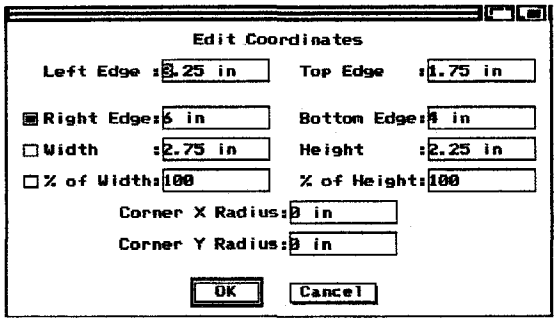
The "align" function can work in a couple of different ways – and it works equally well on structured objects, text, or bitmaps. If just one object is selected, it will perform the function for the object relative to its location on the page. For example, draw a rectangle, select it with the object tool, and then select the "align" function from the object menu. If you select the arrow pointing to the left, the object will be aligned with the left edge of the page. If you select the arrows pointing at each other horizontally, the object will be centered between the left and right edges of the page. The other arrows work in a similar fashion. But what if we have two or more objects that we want to line up on each other? For example, what if we have two blocks of text that should start at exactly the same vertical position on the page? Select all the objects to be aligned (by clicking on them while holding the shift key), and then select the align function. By selecting the arrow pointing up, the upper edge of each block will be moved so that they line up with each other. And what if we want one of the objects to stay exactly where it is while other objects move to align with it? Well, for that we need to skip ahead to one of the next items in the menu: "lock". We simply "lock" the object that we don't want to move and it won't. We can then perform our align operation on the objects in question and only the



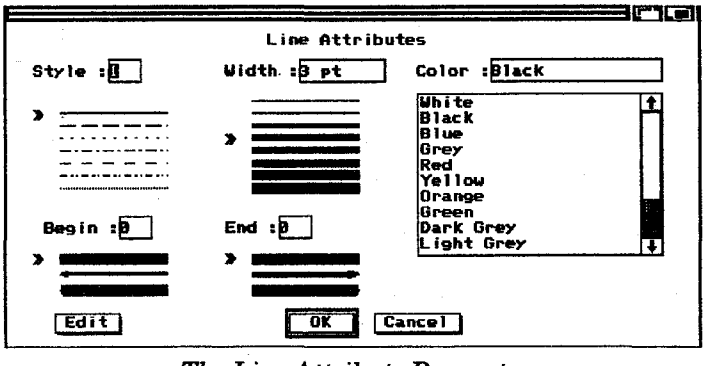
The Align Object Requester



The Rotate Objects Requester



The Edit Coordinates Requester



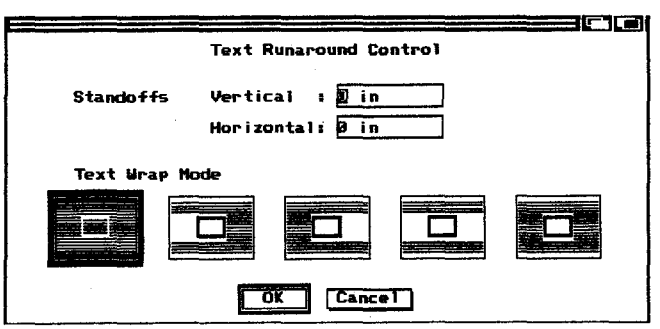
The Line Attribute Requester

unlocked objects will move. Later we can "unlock" the locked object if necessary.

But we just skipped past "rotate". Rotate is one of those rather amazing functions that other programs are still trying to catch up with. Any object can be rotated – even text or bitmapped graphics. If text is rotated, it remains editable. If bitmaps are rotated, they will still print accurately – and they look just as good as when they started. You can rotate any object in any one of three ways. "Rotate" spins the object on the z axis. "Slant" affects only the vertical aspects of the object – in other words, the object will tilt in one direction or the other. "Twist" affects only the horizontal aspects of the object so that the outline of the object rotates but the object itself remains totally vertical.

That brings us to "text runaround". Text can be made to run around any object – even a text object. This can give some rather interesting effects... such as can be obtained when running text around a circle. There are just a couple of things to keep in mind. A group of objects is always treated as a rectangle. Let's assume, for the sake of example, that you have a group of objects and one of the objects in the group is a circle. Let's also assume that you want text to run around that circle. If you select the group and then apply the "text runaround" feature to that group, the text will run around the rectangular shape of the group as a whole. The proper way to get text to run around the circle when the circle is part of a group is to, first, ungroup the objects and apply to "text runaround" to the circle by itself. The objects can then be re-grouped and the "text runaround" feature will still only apply to the circle, even though it is now part of a group. The other thing to keep in mind is that the only text which will be affected by the "text runaround" feature is text which has been entered into a column. Any text which was originally entered directly on the screen will not be affected. This allows some very interesting effects because using this feature means that text can be placed inside an object which has been identified as a "text runaround" object.

Have I left something out? Probably. But next month we will continue with another new subject.



The Text Runaround Requester

Commodore News

The latest developments from Foster McCowan

Recently, Commodore has made some aggressive marketing moves aimed at shoring up its domestic sales operations. Commodore recently announced significant cuts in the suggested retail prices of Amiga 2000 and 3000 series personal computers and selected Amiga peripherals, including the company's AT and XT MS-DOS compatible Amiga bridgeboard products. Price reductions range from 6%-41%. The following are but a few of the reductions, see your dealer for details:

	was	now
Amiga 2000	$1895	$1599
Amiga 2000HD	$2699	$1999
A2058 RAM Expansion Board	$ 649	$ 349
A2286 Amiga AT Bridgeboard	$1599	$ 799
A2300 Amiga Internal Genlock	$ 299	$ 169

In other news, Commodore announced Commodore Express Gold Service, an offshoot of the tremendously successful Commodore Express program which has been serving purchasers of Commodore's consumer products since April 1990. Gold Service, designed for business use, is a service program that will provide 24-hour toll-free helpline service and next day on-site repairs to customers for a one-year period. The service is free of charge for a one year period. Should service be needed as determined by a Commodore Express service agent, Commodore's National Service Provider, HFSI, or a specially trained Amiga reseller, is notified and shipped all repair parts, if needed, via Federal Express. In some cases, unit replacements can be shipped direct to the customer. Next day service is available, provided that the call comes in by 4pm local time. This service applies exclusively to Amiga 2000, Amiga 2000hd, Amiga 2500/30 and Amiga 3000 purchases from authorized Amiga resellers. Commodore will soon offer customers the option to extend the Gold Service coverage by 12 or 24 months.

Thought For The Month

If it weren't for the last minute nothing would get done.

Amiga Library News

Public domain and shareware picks by Bill Raecke

YATC by Aaron Hightower

YATC is a game. Nope – it's not a new version of that old classic, *Yahtzee*. *YATC* stands for *Yet Another Tetris Clone*. Did you think that perhaps you had enough *Tetris* clones by now? Well, maybe you do... but this one has several things to recommend it over the others. It's very slickly done. The graphics are top-notch – and it will run in any one of the four standard screen modes: hires or lores with interlace either on or off as you wish. And it plays well. But what really sets it apart are the computer options.

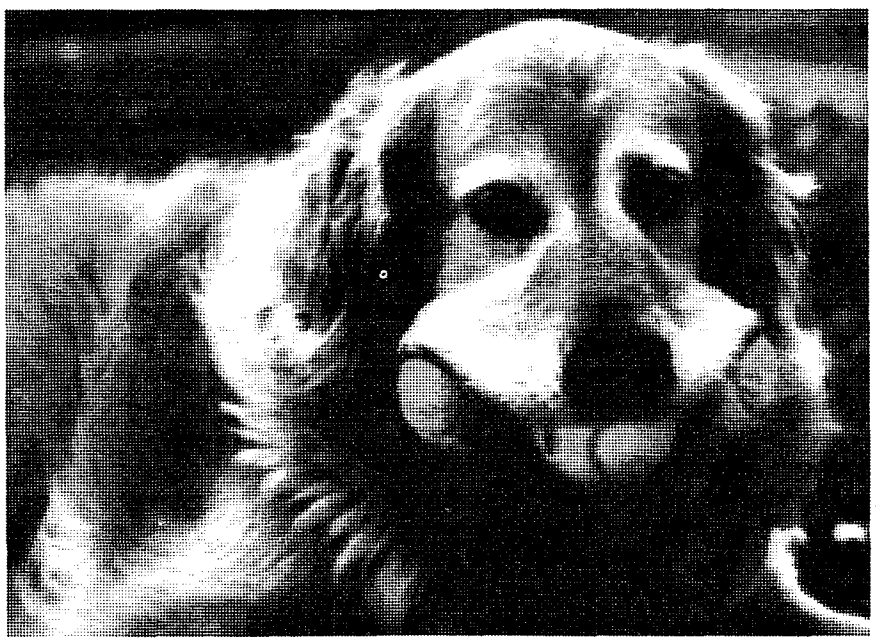
Have you ever wondered just how good at this game you really are? To find out, let the computer play for a while. It's a humbling experience. Also included is a cheat feature (call it a learning tool) where, by hitting the "c" key, the computer will place the currently falling piece for you. It's a good way to help you out of tight spots, learn a little about the proper placement of the pieces, or just run up those high scores.

I also want to point out that *YATC* has been written by Aaron Hightower of the MCCC. One suggestion Aaron – how about a high score save feature? *YATC* can be found on MCCC-A_306.

ZR1-1990 from MCCC-A_303

Solitaire and Nestor by Pat Clark

These are a couple of more games. One of them should be obvious. *Solitaire* is one of the classic versions of the old standby. *Nestor* is another game of solitaire where the object is to remove cards in pairs until they are all gone. It's harder than it sounds. There's nothing particularly new here. What sets these games apart is the slick graphics. They are beautifully done and very easy to play. I recommend them both. They can be found on MCCC-A_306.



CrazyDog from MCCC-A_304

Pictures

This is another great month to add to your collection of pictures to impress your friends with. Although there are quite a few available, my personal favorites this month can be found on MCCC-A_303 and MCCC-A_304. The collection on MCCC-A_303 consists of a picture of the White House, an antique auto, a couple of black bear cubs, an autumnal landscape, a shot of the Chicago harbor, a butterfly fish, a rose, and the new Corvette ZR1. On MCCC-A_304 you will find a comical picture entitled *CrazyDog* – a picture of someone's pet with three tennis balls in his mouth. It's funny enough to be a keeper.

Writin' & Paintin'

C64 & C128 powerhouses for GEOS

by Foster McCowan

Any definitive discussion concerning the GEOS operating system would have to begin with its applications. It would be my guess that with the exception of games, applications such as word processors and paint programs have been the most used pieces of software since the computer revolution began. This fact wasn't overlooked by the people at Berkeley Softworks (a.k.a. Geoworks) for two programs, *Geowrite* and *Geopaint*, have been included with the system since its inception.

Geowrite 2.1 – In order to put word processors into perspective, it helps to recall the price you would pay for a word processor for another machine and the prices the other machines would fetch. Although a MacIntosh can now be had for under a $1000, a high quality word processor for this machine typically weighs in at 200k-400k and ranges upward from $150. Additionally, even though the price of MS-DOS compatibles have been on a downward trend the last 2-3 years, the price of quality word processors did not join the spiral southward. By comparison, you can buy a Commodore 64 for under $125, and *Geowrite 2.1* comes on the GEOS system disk for a retail of less than 39.95. For that price you get one whale of a word processing program! Early releases of *Geowrite* offered word-wrap, tabs, block delete, copy and paste, page breaks, and a WYSIWYG display. All of these, plus a formidable array of other power features are offered by the 2.1 version. The 2.1 version supports margins, decimal tabs, and paragraph indentation for individual paragraphs. You can also center a paragraph, fully justify (providing smooth margins on the right and left sides) it, or just justify it with smooth margins in either the right or left sides. *Geowrite* contains a fully featured search and replace option, including settings for whole words or parts of words and for searching the current page or the whole text. The search is super fast with a RAM expansion unit. Headers and footers that extend up to a third of a page can be inserted, and they can be time and date stamped, and the page number can be inserted. *Geowrite* also features line spacing, which can be set to single, one-and-a-half, or double spacing. But the most important feature is that these features are on-screen, in real time – there are no cumbersome codes to enter at the end of the document. No longer are you forced to wait until your document is printed to see how it turned out. This is biggest reason why more and more programs on more and more machines are going WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get), and it is important to remember that this feature has, through Geos, been available on your machines for some time now. It should be noted that *Geowrite 2.1* for the 128 displays the entire eight inch page on the 80 column screen.

Geowrite Helpers – No quality high-end word processor is complete without several utilities to make them hum, and *Geowrite* is no different. Included on the system disk is *Geospell*, the spell check program, *Text Manager*, which allows *Geowrite* to import text from any Commodore word processor (*Word Writer*, *Paper Clip*, *Easy Script*, and others), and *Geomerge* which allows for the creation of customized form letters and labels. Want to print your documents on a postscript compatible ("jaggie" free) laser printer? If your answer is yes, then you will be happy to know that *Geolaser* is there for you. If you want to add some creative art pieces to your document, or you want to be able to edit your word processing documents with graphic tools then the *Paint Drivers* and *Paint Pages* programs are for you. These handy utility programs are worth the price of the system disk alone!

Geopaint – They say the right side of the brain is the creative side. If you find yourself leaning rightward most of the time, then the real star of Geos for you will be *Geopaint*. *Geopaint* is a powerful program not just because it is a great paint program, but because it is a paint and a draw program. By definition, paint programs essentially chisel the image into RAM. You can erase the image, copy it, or draw over it, but the image isn't flexible. It can't be adjusted. Draw programs (like *MacDraw* for instance), on the other hand, create an image out of mathematical formulas, wherein a square consists not of an equal-sided box as in a paint program, but of four precisely positioned lines. Of course, all of this is invisible to the user but the difference is that a draw image, unlike a paint image can be manipulated at will.

Geopaint achieves its draw-like flexibility with an option to stretch and shrink pasted images to fit a predefined rectangle. When the image is pasted into place, it's equipped with *MacDraw*-like handles that can be used to reposition or adjust the size of the pasted picture scrap. The picture scrap can be pasted transparent or opaque, and the black areas of the scrap can be any of 32 patterns that are available with *Geopaint*. The list of features with this program reads like a who's who of graphics programs. Try these on for size: 16 colors, preview or zoom mode, 14 graphics tools, 32 brush shapes, 32 painting patterns, invert, rotate, move or mirror images, stretch and scale images, overlay effects, ellipses, squares and connected lines just to name a few. The circle feature draws ovals. The oval feature, through the use of a "constrain" tool, can draw circles. That same constrain feature allows for the creation of perfect squares. An added advantage with using *Geopaint* is that fully 60% of all Geos public domain programs (about 200 programs) are developed for use in *Geopaint*. Those who haven't yet turned to Geos should examine this package immediately. Although it literally screams with Ram expansion, it works beautifully with the basic 64 and a 1541 disk drive or its 128 equivalent.

CHAPTER NEWS

Amiga By-The-Loop

Garry Wordelman

Our June Meeting got off to the usual start, with current club and Commodore news as well as information on MetCom 91 (coming soon). One reminder to those taking Harold Williams' Beginners Amiga Class. He will continue on Saturday, July 13th (same time and place, I think) with the topics not covered during the June class. Anyone still interested in picking up the class at this point can do so by contacting Harold before this date.

Our ShareWare for the month is another icon utility called *IconMaster*. This utility allows one to draw or edit or create an icon using a ten color palette. You can also change the icon to any one of the five icon types. It appears to be a very useful and capable program. Support our ShareWare.

The program presentation was made by Bill Raecke using *PageStream* Version 2.1 from Sub-Logik. This appears to be one of the most powerful desktop publishing programs I have seen. Bill described many of its features from setting the page size from 2 inches square to as much as 2400 feet, having multiple type fonts and sizes, being able to simply modify the selected fonts in many different ways, creating objects of hundreds of different shapes, sizes, fills or patterns, or to manipulating outside bit mapped pictures, objects, or drawing to suit your needs. Bill even went through a sample page building procedure which he uses in our newsletter. He really made it look easy, though I know he spent many, many hours in learning how to use *PageStream* to his best advantage. He obviously knows what he is doing by the excellent job he does on the newsletter each month. For more details on *PageStream*, see Bill's continuing series in the April, May, June, etc. issues of the newsletter. Bill gave a great presentation and anyone interested in desktop publishing should not have missed it. Don't forget to come to our next meeting for the latest in Amiga goodies.

Amiga Central

David Campbell

At this month's meeting we saw a nice selection of audio digitizers. Scott Lamb (one of our resident celebrity developers, now of CDTV fame...) showed us the Future Sound digitizer with *Audiomaster III* and the Aegis audio digitizer. Harold Williams showed us *Perfect Sound*. As anyone that has played a quality Amiga game knows, the proper use of sound can make the difference between ho-hum and wow! Aside from professional use, audio is and addition for the average user that is just plain fun. Audio digitizers tend to be much less expensive than video products. In general, they are no more complicated to use than a standard tape recorder. The difference is the level of control you have after recording. Just add your imagination and a couple of push buttons from CanDo and you can have your Amiga chirping, barking, or singing opera.

As an added attraction, Bill Raecke showed us his new hand scanner. This little gem is just the ticket for desktop publishing applications. So, if scanners and digitizers both get images into your computer, what is a scanner and what is a digitizer? In general, digitizers work from video sources (cameras, typically) whereas scanners work directly from hard copy. Scanners differ from video digitizers in several other ways. Digitizers (like DigiView) are great for capturing video signals and producing realistic screen images. They do this by taking advantage of the Amiga's color and resolution to trick the human eye. When these images are transferred to paper by a laser printer, the result is often grainy because of the loss of color. Printers tend to be much higher resolution than computer screens and can take advantage of denser images. Scanners (such as the one Bill showed us) fill the bill. They scan images at several times the density of the Amiga screens. They typically do this at the loss of color, but that is not a problem for publishing applications since most of us use monochrome printers. For high end applications, there are color scanners, but expect to pay much, much more.

At the July meeting, Jody Reimers will be back to show us *Imagine*, a powerful ray tracing package. Jody is the animator for the Dallas Mavericks and uses an Amiga to program the large display seen at Reunion Arena.

These Dealers offer discounts to MCCC members. Be sure to show your membership card.

Action Computer
C64, C128, Amiga Repair
2720 Royal Lane
Dallas, Texas 75229
(214) 484-7838

Metropolitan Computer
Amiga Software & Hardware
800 East Arapaho Suite 110
Richardson, Texas 75081
(214) 437-9119

Fort Worth

Julia Sookma

Our June meeting saw slightly lower attendance, but C64 and C128 interest is flying high! If you aren't on vacation don't miss our July 13 meeting!

CHAPTER NEWS

Two of our members, John Burt and Stephen Burt presented our program and demonstrated *Partner 128*, *Sky Travel*, and *Drive Music*. *Partner 128*, a cartridge-based program, has eight options ranging from a calendar, memo pad, to an address and phone number listing. An interesting feature of *Partner 128* is swift lock. By entering a code (chosen by the user), the keyboard is "locked." When the appropriate code is entered the program continues. *Partner 128* also "sits" in the background until you need it – very convenient!

The second part of our program was *Sky Travel*. With this program you can "view" constellations, planets and even deep space from any location on the Earth. Using information from the newspaper, we "viewed" the upcoming July 11 eclipse from Mexico City, Mexico at 12 noon. We also viewed Halley's Comet on April 7, 1986 at 11:30 p.m. from Australia. This unique program offers not only fun and enjoyment, but a high degree of accuracy for the amateur astronomer.

Stephen Burt presented two unusual programs. One was digitized music from the movie *Batman*. The other program was called *Drive Music*, which actually makes music come from the disk drive! Getting into the spirit of the upcoming July 4th holiday, Joe Ostrokol demonstrated a new disk in the club library that displays fireworks. We even had a door prize at our meeting. The lucky winner, Jack Hagemeyer, is now the proud owner of the program *Crime and Punishment*.

Our next meeting is on July 13, 1:30 p.m. at West Berry Church of Christ, 2701 West Berry in Fort Worth. Hope to see you there!

HEB

Robyn Wilson

At the June meeting, I did a demo on *Vizastar 128*. This is a database and spreadsheet program. The graphics portion of the program is very colorful. *Vizastar 128* is known as the "best spreadsheet and database written for the C128". It has a similar design to Lotus. When you boot up the program using both a cartridge and a disk, the first screen you see has a grid on it. Using letters and numbers that you see on the top and left side of the grid you define your fields (inputs). This would create your spreadsheet. From another option, you choose to make a database. This is usually used for making up lists, like address, Christmas, and others. It is a little more involved, but reading some of the manual does help.

It was a very informative discussion not only to the members, but to myself. I went to "on the spot" learning when a question or two came up that I couldn't answer. Well, I looked through the manual until I found the answer. The reason I mention this is to tell you that this is the reason we discuss different subjects about your computer system. It is a learning process that everyone shares in. You think you know it all and "poof" – there is something new!

For the July 6th meeting, we planned on showing off fireworks programs or anything related to celebrating July 4th. The meeting is at the Hurst Recreation Center at 1:30 pm. The August agenda is a discussion of a variety of small programs.

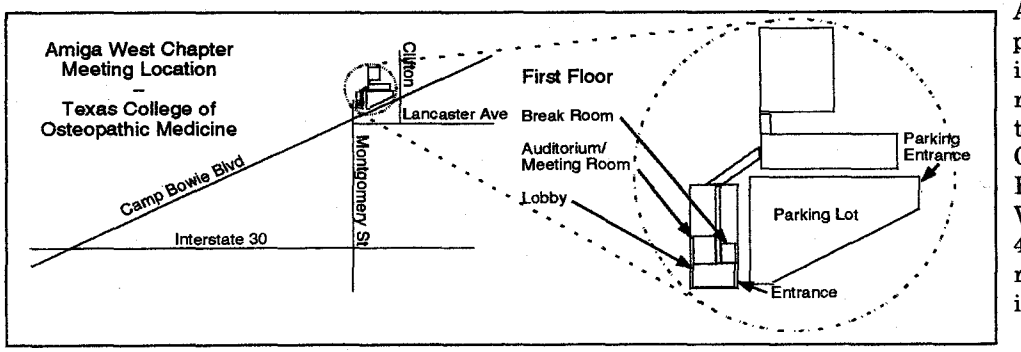
Coming In July

Amiga Central
Imagine
Jody Reimers

HEB
Fireworks

Amiga Beginner's Class

The Amiga Beginner's Class is being continued with another three-hour session July 13th. This session will emphasize using WorkBench and the CLI (Shell). Other topics for discussion include: understanding and modifying the Startup-Sequence script, hard disk organization and maintenance, using floppy disks drives, and a look at the utilities included on the two Survival-Kit disks. The class will be held at the North Richland Hills Recreation Center (the same location as Amiga-By-The-Loop chapter meetings) from 10:00 AM until 1:00 PM. There is a $5 registration fee ($3 for members that attended the previous class). Attending the previous class is not a pre-requisite for this class. Contact Harold Williams at 483-0537 for registration information.



The Fine Print

The Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

Statement of Purpose: The Metroplex Commodore Computer Club is a not-for-profit organization devoted to the collection and dissemination of computer knowledge, to the encouragement of computer education, and to the use of Commodore computers in the home, at school, and in business.

Legal Stuff: The MCCC is not connected with Commodore Business Machines, Inc. Commodore and Commodore product names (PET, CBM, VIC, C64, C128, and Amiga) are registered trademarks of Commodore, Inc.

Meetings and Membership: Our meetings are open to all. Family membership dues are $20 per year or $12 for six months. and entitle the member to a monthly mailed copy of the MCCC News, free access to the club's extensive public domain and shareware software library, and discounts at many area merchants. An additional $12 annual fee provides access to the MCCC multi-user Bulletin Board System.

The MCCC News

Copyright Information: Material printed in the MCCC News is not copyrighted unless so noted. Articles may be reprinted or otherwise distributed by other user groups or by individuals who may find it helpful as long as proper credit is given to the author and to the MCCC.

Advertising: The MCCC News accepts two kinds of advertising. Member ads are those which are submitted by a member and which are not of a commercial nature. There is no charge for member ads. Commercial ads are those which advertise multiple like items for sale. Rates for camera-ready commercial ads are as follows for a single month or (consecutive three months): Full Page - $36 ($96); Half Page - $18 ($48); Quarter Page - $12 ($32); Business Card - $6 ($16). Materials to be inserted will cost $.08 per copy (duplication not included) and must be inserted into all newsletters for the month.

Articles: Members are encouraged to submit articles. Articles should be submitted as ASCII text. They may be uploaded to the MCCC BBS, to StarText, or submitted on disk. If these methods are not possible, I will, as a last resort, accept printed articles. If graphics need to be included they may be submitted as Amiga IFF files, PageStream structured drawings, Professional Draw clips, or, again as a last resort, printed output.

Deadline: The deadline for submissions to the MCCC News is 7am of the fourth Saturday of each month. Payment must accompany all ad copy. Make checks payable to MCCC and mail c/o Bill Raecke, 2614 Charolais Way, Arlington, Texas 76017.

Extra Copies: Extra Copies of the MCCC News may be obtained for $1 per copy. Orders should be forwarded to the club along with the required fee by the regular newsletter deadline.

Normal Meeting Schedule

1st Saturday	MCCC Board of Directors
1st Saturday	HEB Chapter
2nd Tuesday	Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
2nd Tuesday	Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter
2nd Thursday	Amiga West Chapter
2nd Saturday	Fort Worth Chapter
2nd Saturday	Arlington/Grand Prairie Workshop
3rd Wednesday	Amiga North Dallas Chapter
3rd Thursday	Amiga Central Chapter

SIGS

Programmer SIG	Kevin Wambganz	214-414-9460
VidSIG	Jack DeTore	817-275-3762

MCCC Board of Directors

President	Craig Bird	817-540-3360
Vice President	Ned Kelly	817-277-5825
Treasurer	Harold Williams	817-483-0537
Secretary	John Malmstrom	817-282-6158
Librarian	Gary Campbell	817-297-4125
(C64/128 help)	Joe Ostrokol	817-534-1990
Education Chair	David Anspach	214-438-5684
BBS Coordinator	Okley Moss	817-282-7751
Newsletter Editor	Bill Raecke	817-465-2014
Past President	Ned Kelly	817-277-5825
BBS Numbers	**817-268-4191**	**817-268-4196**

MCCC Chapter Officers

Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter

President	David Owens	817-577-2304
Vice President	Barbara Cramer	817-284-3565
Treasurer	Bruce Nelson	817-498-0899
Secretary	Garry Wordelman	817-281-7457
Librarian	Gary Campbell	817-297-4125

Amiga Central Chapter

President	Ray Howard	214-660-4819
Vice President	Harold Williams	817-483-0537
Treasurer	Bill Raecke	817-465-2014
Secretary	David Campbell	214-660-1646
Librarian	Ned Kelly	817-277-5825

Amiga North Dallas Chapter

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Vice President	Danny White	214-422-7131
Treasurer	Forrest McKinney	214-530-4589
Secretary	Genny White	214-422-7131
Librarian	Wm. Dockendorf	214-407-0564

Amiga West Chapter

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Vice President	John Belyeu	817-367-0264
Treasurer	Wayne Brodnax	817-244-0828
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Secretary	Dorothy Gates	214-262-7884
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Vice President	John Sookma	817-293-8691
Treasurer	Julia Sookma	817-293-8691
Secretary	Ellen Triplett	817-295-5709
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Hurst-Euless-Bedford Chapter

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Vice President	Jon Moreland	214-579-1293
Treasurer	Bill Howe	817-577-3898
Secretary	Robyn Wilson	817-282-3458
Librarian	Bill Worthington	817-834-6150

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Jul 6 — MCCC Board of Directors
10:00 am - N.Richland Hills Community Center
Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N.Richland Hills
Craig Bird, 817-540-3360

Jul 6 — Hurst-Euless-Bedford Chapter
1:30 pm - Hurst Recreation Center
Mary Drive South of Pipeline, Hurst
Jesse Carden, 214-890-0426

Jul 9 — Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
7:30 pm - N.Richland Hills Community Center
Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N.Richland Hills
David Owens, 817-577-2304

Jul 9 — Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter
6:30 pm - Grand Prairie Public Library
Conover Drive, Grand Prairie
Glen Herring, 817-572-0489

Jul 11 — Amiga West Chapter
Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine
Lancaster & Camp Bowie, Fort Worth
Jack Smith, 817-924-9289

Jul 13 — Fort Worth Chapter
1:30 pm - West Berry Church of Christ
2701 West Berry, Fort Worth
John Sookma, 817-293-8691

Jul 13 — **Amiga Beginner's Class** ($5 registration)
10:00 am - N.Richland Hills Community Center
Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N.Richland Hills
Harold Williams, 817-483-0537

Jul 13 — Arlington/Grand Prairie Workshop
1:30 pm - Grand Prairie Public Library
Conover Drive, Grand Prariie
Blake Brown, 214-642-6107

Jul 17 — Amiga North Dallas Chapter
7:30 pm - Richardson Civic Center
411 West Arapaho, Richardson
Craig Bird, 817-540-3360

Jul 18 — Amiga Central Chapter
7:30 pm - Arlington Community Center
2800 S. Center, Arlington
Ray Howard, 214-660-4819

August Newsletter Deadline - 7am, July 27

MCCC NEWS

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